

The keeping of  
**Holy Days**

Recommended in a

**SERMON**

PREACHED at

**HADHAM**

BEFORE THE

Right Honorable and Right Reverend

FATHER in GOD

**HENRY**

LORD Bishop

OF

**LONDON** &c.

AT

His Lordships late Conference  
with his Clergy there.

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By *Thomas Leigh* B. D. Vicar of Bishops  
**STORTFORD.** ☉

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LONDON, Printed by *H. Hills* Jun. for *Walter Kestilby* at  
the Bishop's Head in St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1684.

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STURTEVANT.

Printed by W. Smith, at the New York Office, 1884.

*Hoc quicquid est, dudum aures multorum,*

*Nunc oculos omnium metuit ;*

*Villæ meæ natalis Domino primario,*

*Vicariatus, quo ibidem fungor, Patrono extraordi-*

*Ecclesiæ Londini, & quaquâ patemus (nario ;*

*Trinobantes, Antistiti Vigilantissimo :*

*Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ Lumini & Columini,*

*Pietatis primævæ Cultori Eximio,*

*Reformatæ Religionis Adsertori fortissimo.*

*Cleri sui Inspectori simul & Speculo,*

*Vindicti pariter ac Judici integerrimo,*

**H E N R I C O**

*Prænobilis C O M P T O Norum Familiæ*

*Summo Decoris & Ornamento,*

*Viro nullis non nominibus Honorando,*

*Me meaque omnia*

*Quantâ licet demissione atque observantiâ*

**L M Q D D C Q**

**T. L**

T. I.

L M D D C

Quantū licet demissione atque obsequio  
Me meque omnia

Vive nullis non nominibus Honorando,  
Summo Decori & Ornamento,

Precedibilis COMPTONIANAE Familiae

H E N R I C O

Vindicta peccator ac fidei integritas,  
Cleri sui Inspector simul & Speculo,

Reformatae Religionis Adversari fortissimo.  
Pietatis primus Cultor Eximio,

Ecclesiae Anglicanae Luminis & Columnae,  
Timorantes, Augustini Vigilantissimo:

Ecclesiae Londinensis quatuordecim  
Vicariatus quo ibidem fungor, Patrono extror-  
dina- (ratio;

Villae meae natalis Domino primario,

Nunc oculos omnium mecum;

Hoc quicquid est, dudum aures multorum,

Cujus mandato



(12)  
 Psalm 118. 24.

*This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoyce and be glad in it.*

**H** E Occasion of our present Meeting is to inquire into the reasons of setting apart and keeping certain days for the more special Worship of God; which are therefore call'd Holy; and into the reasons why they are so better kept. The former I shall chiefly speak to from the words now read; which the Jews understand of the Day of David's advancement to the Throne; and accordingly the Chaldee Paraphrast renders the 22th. ver. thus The Builders despised the Youth that was among the Sons of Jesse, and yet he deserv'd to be made King and Ruler; and then brings in the Builders and the Sons of Jesse with others singing alternatim thus; the Builders begin, *This is the Lords doing*; the Sons of Jesse answer, *It is marvelous in our eyes*: The Builders go on, *This is the day which the Lord hath made*; the Sons of Jesse, *Let us rejoyce and be glad in it*: The Builders again, *Save now we beseech thee, O Lord*; then Jesse and his Wife, *O Lord we beseech thee send now prosperity*; and lastly, David and Samuel and the whole Tribe of Judah are brought in bearing their parts in this Psalm of Thanksgiving. And they had good reason to understand

stand the Day spoken of, to be the Day of *David's* coming to the Crown; but we have greater, to understand it of the Day of our Lord's Resurrection from the dead; which was the Day whereon he began his Reign or the exercise of his Kingly Office. For our Lord appropriates to himself those words of the 22<sup>d</sup>. *ver.* *The stone which the Builders refus'd is become the head of the Corner*, Matt. 21. 42. adding also the words of the 23. *ver.* and St. Peter (himself a great stone in that Building) applies the same to our Lord after and upon account of his Resurrection. *Act.* 4. 11. 1 *Epistle.* 2. 4. To which add the Hosanna and Benediction of the two following verses, which were the Acclamations of the multitude, when our Lord rode in Kinglike manner to *Jerusalem*, Matt. 21. 5, 9.

We have in the words, the Constitution of a Holy or Festival day, and the Celebration of it.

The Constitution, *This is the day which the Lord hath made.*

The Celebration, *We will rejoyce and be glad in it.*

First, For the Constitution: Here is the ground and reason for the ordaining and keeping of a Day Holy; because it is that which the Lord hath made; where by making, 1. We don't understand the creating of a Day, which is done by dividing the Darkness from the Light; for so all days are of Gods making, and made without any distinction of *Festi & Profesti*, *Fasti & Nefasti*, Holy and Unholy, Lucky and Unlucky, or any other differences than what the course of the Sun and the seasons of the year do necessarily cause. 2. Nor do we understand here only Gods appointing of a Day to be kept for Religious purposes; for that hath and may be done by man. But

We

We understand thereby the making of a Day signal and remarkable by some extraordinary deliverance or other Mercy bestow'd upon Mankind in general, or some Nation or great body of Men in particular. Such a Mercy, such a Deliverance leaves a certain stamp or impression upon that Day, whereon it was bestow'd, as to make it be call'd a Holy day, a High day, a day of days, a day more extraordinary and notable than its fellows. Such was the day of *David's* Exaltation to the Throne, a Day of great Mercy and Deliverance to the People of Israel, and such was the Day of our Lord's Resurrection, a Day of great Mercy and Deliverance to all mankind. Such Days are, if I may so call them, *integri et singulares*, Days of a singular make, and which God hath as it were redeem'd and purchas'd to himself from the rest of the days of the year. Grant me this ground to go upon, and I shall hope to give you some tolerable account of the Institution of Holy days. What I have to say, shall be comprehended under a very few Heads.

First, Upon this ground it is that we hear of no special Day set apart for above two thousand years, unless that of the Sabbath. For altho I doubt not but that, as there were some days whereon the Sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord (as we find twice in *Job*,) so there was also some time whereon the Sons of Men made their Religious addresses to Him; And I understand, when 'tis said after the birth of *Enos*, *Then men began to call upon the name of the Lord*, thus, Then men being increased into a multitude the Worship of God became more publick: Yet, I say, we are not sure, whether the time was fix'd

and unalterable, or whether chosen or commanded upon occasion. We read of Holy Persons or Priests of Holy things, as Sacrifices and Tithes, and of Holy places often before the Deliverance out of *Egypt*; but not of Holy times: Altars several, built by *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and several of them upon the score of Gods appearing to them; when it might have been said to them as it was to *Moses* and *Joshua*, upon the same account, The ground whereon thou standest is Holy; and, they might have said, as the Psalmist does here of a Day, This is the Place, which the Lord hath made; that is, signalised by his special appearance in a way of Mercy. But no fix'd times; because God for the first Two thousand years of the World had rather given publick tokens of his Justice and Displeasure, than of his Goodness and Mercy; as in the drowning of the Old World, the burning of *Sodom* and the three neighbouring Cities, the confounding of Tongues; several Famines and Plagues. The favours which God bestow'd at any time, were only on single Persons or their Families; which, although we need not doubt but they did most thankfully acknowledge; yet if we grant, they did yearly commemorate the same during their own lives, that they did oblige their Posterity to do the same, we have no ground to think. For, I suppose, he that finds in an Eastern Calendar, exhibited by Mr. *Selden*, *Ingressus Noachi in Arcam*, and *Egressus Noachi ex Nave*, will not think it signifies much against what I say.

Secondly, Upon this ground, as soon as any other, I would conclude the Sabbath-day was kept from the beginning of the World, in honor  
of



of the great maker of it; and that God by ceasing from the making of all other things made that a signal Day, a Day of Rest and Joy. For, if at the laying of the foundations of the Earth, *the Morning Stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy*, Job 38. 7. can we think the Sons of Men were silent and stupid; when they not only beheld that great work compleated, but constantly enjoy'd their shares therein, and were themselves no small part of it? So stupendious a work deserv'd to be Celebrated as soon as it was finish'd, and in that portion of time which God had sanctified. And it was surely, a greater work to make a World, than to deliver a small People out of a Tyrants hands; and yet this had not only a yearly, but also this weekly Commemoration of it. I would, I say, upon this ground conclude that of *Gen. 2. 3.* to be more than Proleptical; but that there are some other reasons on the other hand, wherein I have not yet satisfied my self. But as from such a conclusion the Morality of a Seventh day could not be inferr'd; so without such a conclusion we need not doubt our obligation to keep the Christian Sabbath; from this very ground we now go upon, as may be seen anon. Wherefore I pass on, and say in the third place.

3. Upon this ground we shall find the Jewish Festivals to have been founded; as well those that were ordain'd by Men, as those that were commanded by God himself. The chief of Gods own commanding were the weekly Sabbath, and those three that required their yearly attendance in person at *Jerusalem*. All which were commemorative of something pass'd and Typical of something future; and they all related to the redemption of the Israelites out of *Egypt*.

1. The



1. The Sabbath-day had that respect: Wherefore it is observable that in the *Deuteronomy* (c. 5. v. 15.) the reason fetch'd from Gods resting on the seventh day is omitted (the reason express'd *Ex. 20.* and still retain'd by us) and this is inserted in the room thereof: *Remember that thou wast a Servant in the Land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence with a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day.*

2. That the Passover was therefore also commanded, is so notorious, that I need say nothing: This was a Feast of seven days, on the first whereof this Deliverance was wrought. *This (says Ex. 12. 14.) day shall be to you for a Memorial, and ye shall keep it a Feast to the Lord throughout your generations, ye shall keep it a Feast by an Ordinance for ever.*

3. That of Pentecost, which was ordain'd in Memory of the giving of the Law; and therefore the Jews call'd it *Festum Legis*. A great Blessing this was. For though then other Lords had no dominion over them, yet Anarchy would have been little better than Tyranny, and their deliverance out of the house of Bondage a delivery into a Wilderness of violence, tumult and confusion; had they not been afterwards form'd into a Polity, and receiv'd certain Laws, Statutes and Judgments, whereby they should be govern'd both in Religious and Civil affairs, and this was done or began to be done upon the day of Pentecost, and this also had a special reference to their Emancipation from Egyptian bondage; according to, *Deut. 16. 10, 12. Thou shalt keep the Feast of Weeks unto the Lord thy God, Thou, and thy Son, and thy Servant; and thou shalt*

*shall remember that thou wast a Bondman in Egypt.*

4. The Feast of Tabernacles had the like reference, *Levit. 23. 42, 43. Ye shall dwell in Booths seven days, that your generations may know that I made the Children of Israel to dwell in Booths, when I brought them out of the Land of Egypt, I am the Lord your God.*

5. Add, how the Feast of Trumpets call'd a Sabbath, a Memorial of blowing of Trumpets, a Holy Convocation seems to have been ordain'd in remembrance of the taking of *Jericho* by the blowing of Trumpets; the taking of which City was the first Possession the Israelites took of the Land of Promise, and an earnest of all the rest. We need not here dissemble what *P. Fagius* tells us, how on the Seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles they went seven times round the Altar, in memory of the taking of that City, the City of Palms, bearing Palm-branches in their hands; and indeed of such chiefly they were requir'd to make their Booths, *Lev. 23. 43.* It is all one to our purpose. But I will not stand so much on these things, nor on the Feasts that follow, which were of human ordination. As 1. The Feast of Purim, ordain'd by *Esther* and *Mordecai*, and receiv'd by the Jews with general consent to be remembred and kept throughout every Generation, every Province, every City, every Family in Memorial of their deliverance from the Bloody Conspiracy of *Haman*. 2. The Feast of Dedication; those *Exultation*, (which our Lord honour'd with his presence) ordain'd in memory of the Dedication of the Temple and Altar made by *Judas Maccabeus* after the horrid Profanations of *Antiochus*. 3. The Feast of Fire, which was given from Heaven, when *Nehemiah* offer'd Sacrifice after his building the Temple and the Altar whereof read *2. Ma: c. 1. 18, &c.*

Fourthly;

Fourthly, Come we now to our Christian Festivals and to shew that the days and times of them were made by God also; signalis'd and exempt four of the number of common days, by far greater Mercies and Deliverances, than ever were bestowed on the *Israelites*; and of more universal concern. These are of Gods making rather than Mans; He hath set his Seal upon them, and by his own deed plainly pointed out our duty. We in keeping them adore Gods extraordinary Providence in the greatest managements, that could possibly be in order to our welfare. What Man doth in these is but his sealing to the Counterpart of that which God himself hath dictated and wrought with his own hand; It is but a re-stification of his Thankfulness, and that is no human Invention, but a result of the Law of Nature. For the Church of *England* (and I doubt not the like of all other Reformed Churches, which have their Holy days too) hath no other end in appointing these days but as they are days of Thanksgiving to God; and that, either for those great Mysteries of his Goodness, Wisdom and Power, that concurr'd to the compleating of the work of our Redemption; Or for those gracious means, whereby the glad Tidings of Salvation have been made known, and become saying unto us. 1. For the Mysteries themselves, the first great Mystery of Godliness, or Christian Religion, is God manifested in the Flesh; and this we think our selves bound to commemorate on the days of his Incarnation (commonly call'd the *Annunciation*) and of his Nativity. The next is his being Justified in the Spirit at his Resurrection, and this we Celebrate, as on every Lords day, so especially on that day of the year, whenon he rose. Then his being receiv'd into Glory on *Ascension*

day; his being Preach'd to the Gentiles on the *Epiphany*, whereto are premis'd and subjoyn'd that of the Circumcision and Presentment of our Lord in the Temple, to shew our hope of the Conversion of the Jews, and that we and they must expect to be saved by one and the same Saviour. 2. Others are in contemplation of the Means whereby so great a Salvation hath been publish'd for the benefit of all mankind. As 1. The Descent of the Holy Ghost, for which we have our *Whitsunday*. 2. Our Lords being seen of Angels in order to make them his Ministering Spirits, to Minister to them that shall be Heirs of Salvation; for which we have that of *Michael* and all Angels. 3. His being believed on in the World, through the Preaching and Writing of the Apostles and Evangelists, and the means of all those Persons and Things, whereby so great a Mystery was made credible to the World; as was that of our Lords Birth by the little less miraculous Birth of *John* the Baptist (the only Saint therefore whose Nativity we observe) and the dreadful Massacre of the Fourteen thousand Infants at *Bethlehem*: And that of his Resurrection and Ascension by the aforesaid Effusion of the Holy Ghost, the death of the Protomartyr *Stephen* (who saw our Lord standing at the right hand of God) and all other Saints and Martyrs their Holy lives and painful deaths. And now after all, when the great Creator and Redeemer of Mankind, and Sanctifier of the Elect have been devoutly acknowledged on distinct days; If there be one added to recognise the Ineffable *Trin-Unity*, I hope none will gainsay it, though the ground I go upon will not reach it. Ye see now our Church hath not stuffed her Calendar with the Invention of the Cross of Christ, of



the Head of *John Baptist*, the Bones of *St. Luke*, the Relicks of any other Martyrs, with the Names of feign'd or real Saints, that had not a special Commission to Preach the Gospel, or were not extraordinary instruments to assert the Credibility of it. So that our Church-Calendar is a kind of Catechism, instructive even of them that cannot read, where Holy days are duly observ'd.

Fifthly, Upon this ground we may build the true degrees and distinctions of Holy days. All the Rubricks are not of an equal dye; there are, if I may so say, *dies sordidi*, scarlet days, *Festa duplicia, majora & minora*, as they us'd to speak. God hath left a greater impresson and mark upon some than upon others, as he did upon the Jewish; and as they had, so have we upon the same score three distinctions of Days. And this threefold degree of Holiness might be made out as well in Persons and Places, as Times, both in the Jewish and Christian Church; but that is alien from our business.

First, The Lords day is (as the Sabbath was with them) the Queen and Empress of Days; a day which God hath Crown'd more than any other, by extraordinary Acts of his own. 'Tis the first day that God made, that whereon he began the Creation of the World, and that whereon our Blessed Lord finish'd the work of our Redemption. It pleads the greatest Antiquity, as a day set apart for all Religious Performances; that whereon our Lord twice visited his Disciples, that whereon the Holy Ghost descended upon them; that whereon *St. Peter* preach'd and converted Three thousand Souls; whereon *St. Paul* gave the Holy Communion and us'd to have his Collections for the Poor; that whereon the Primitive Christians us'd to Pray standing,



ding, and always forbid Fasting. A Day, which the Great *Constantine* took care to be wholly devoted to Divine Worship, and Christian Instruction; on it he caus'd all Courts of Judicature to be shut up; all publick Suits and private Arbitrations to be superseded. The Great *Theodosius* forbid all publick shews and spectacles on that Day; The other *Theodosius* did the like, and moreover provided in case the Day of the Birth or Inauguration of the Emperor happen'd on the Lord's day, the solemnities usual in honour of the Imperial Majesty should be deferr'd till another day. A Day which always, as far as we can find, had the Preheminence in this our Land. Of the *British* Church we have scarce any Records; but for our Antecessors the *Saxons*, it is demonstrable, that they, after they became a Christian and settled People for above Three Hundred years gave the preference to this above all other Festivals, although a certain Historian hath born us in hand to the contrary. The Laws of King *Ina* and of King *Withred* at the Council of *Berghamsted*; the Canons of the Council of *Clove-shaw* or *Cliffe* held under *Cuthbert* Archbishop of *Canterbury*; the Excerptions of *Egbert* Archbishop of *York*. The Laws of King *Alfred* and *Edward* the Elder, in conjunction with *Guthrun* the Dane. The Laws of King *Athelstan*, King *Edgar* the Peaceable, and King *Ethelred* in a General Council of all *England*, and King *Hanute*; All take most especial care for the observance of the Lords day above others; and, if I mistake not, in one place 'tis call'd The Holy Day. This is plain to any one who consults that great lover of Church and Clergy, the Learned and Industrious Sir *Henry Spelman*. I should not doubt to answer the Pompous Arguments that are

brought to the contrary from the times of the *Norman* Confusions, and afterwards; but I hold not myself so much bound to account for those times; because if they did reduce the Queen of Days to a common Peerage with the other less Holy; it is no more to be wondred at than twenty things besides: For they made the Virgin and other Saints, fellows with our Lord, or rather Superiors in all other Honors. Where one Church was built in Honor of our Lord, there were ten Dedicated to St. Mary; ten *Ave-Maries* said for one *Pater-noster*, and in several other things, the Mother had ten to one odds of her Son; and Men were grown so fet-tish at last as with a small distinction to allow that *Pater-noster* might be said to the Mother of our Lord.

And now let me speak alittle to the Honor of of the Church of *England*, as it hath stood ever since our happy Reformation. Some that have taken good pains to deliver us from the Superstitious and Judaizing Doctrines of others about the Observation of our Lords day, have run into another Extreme, and levelling that with other Holy days, intitl'd to our Church their own private Persuasion. Surely our Church intended a difference, when Ordaining the incomparable Litany to be always a part of the Service of the Lord's day, which is only accidentally a part of any other Festival Service; and certainly the Solemn recital of the Ten Commandments, and the Fourth among them, with the same ejaculatory Prayer on the Peoples part, is very tempting to them to think that our Church had her Eye chiefly on this Day, having told us nothing of her mind to the contrary. Nay, I think, who ever can construe *English*, will find how in the Homily of the Place and Time of Prayer, the far greatest stress

is

is laid upon this day; and no Comments or Distinctions have yet evinced the contrary. Add that no Apocryphal Lesson is appointed for any Lord's day throughout the whole year; but for other Holy days, several. Add how in the Explications of the said Fourth Commandment in the Catechism of King *Edward VI.* and in the Greater Catechism set forth in the days of Queen *Elizabeth* (which only is allow'd to be taught with the Lesser by the Canons of 1571. and the Canons of the first of King *James*) there is no notice taken of any other but our Lords Day. As for any Statutes made on this behalf (as one or more have been in every Reign of our Reformed Princes) I leave you to the Learned in the Law; observing this only, that care hath been taken for the Suppression of all Markets and Fairs on this day.

And what if, after all this, *Tindall* said, that our Lords Day might be translated from *Sunday* to *Monday*, and *Calvin* would have it to *Thursday*, what is that to our Church? I think they are much mistaken, if the ground, whereon I build, have any solidity in it. *Sunday* is that day on the Week which our Lord hath made, made more signal than all the rest by his Resurrection from the dead, and raising us up from the state of death, &c.

And now (my Christian Friends) tell me what harm is done, if the Queen take place of the Ladies of Honor; and they are not at all shut out, but admitted in their proper orders. For

Secondly, There is some difference to be made, and hath always been between the rest of the Holy days, though all are Holy. Precedence hath been given especially to those that record some Eminent Particularities of our Lords great Undertaking; such as his Nativity, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension and Mission

Mission of the Holy Ghost. Which are too great Mysteries either to be huddled up all in one day, and not Celebrated distinctly on some peculiar days; or to be no more regarded than the deaths of our fellow-Christians. Three of them have a more than ordinary mark set upon them, as they are Antitypes to three Typical Feasts of the Jews or (if that Phrase please not) as they are successive to them, and commemorative of greater Things, which those lesser Celebrated by them, did but fore-shadow. For

First, As the Deliverance out of *Egypt* did Typifie, our Redemption from a greater Bondage; so the Feast kept in memory of the former might justly Typifie, or Usher in, or give sufficient Intimation for the keeping of a Feast in honor of the later, both happening at the same time of the Year.

Secondly, As the Feast of Weeks did commemorate the giving of the Law upon Mount *Sinai*, so doth our *Whit-Sunday* the publishing of the Law of the Spirit or Doctrine of the Gospel upon Mount *Sion*, in a no less extraordinary manner, upon the same day; and therefore the later Feast deservedly took place, or came in the room of the former.

Thirdly, If the Feast of Tabernacles did prefigure our Lords Nativity (as the Learned *Mede* not unhappily conjectures) for then the Word was made Flesh and Tabernacled among us; then the Feast of the Nativity rightly succeeds in the room thereof. I will not meddle with the contemporing those two great Feasts (much hath been said *pro* and *con*) but instead thereof, ask how or when that Prophecy of *Zachary* was fulfill'd, but by the Succession of this later Feast in room of the former? That I mean of *c. 14. 16. It shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the Nations that come, or shall come against Jerusalem* (for so it may be rendered

rendred, and is by the *Chaldee, Syriack and Arabick*; by the Latin of *Arias Montanus* and the *Tigurin* Translators, rendred in the present or future Tense) shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This Prophecy certainly was not fulfill'd by the famous Feast of Tabernacles kept in *Nehemia's* time: See *Nehem. c. 8. v. 14, and 17.* For, according to the Law but newly read to the People, they that kept that Feast were to be Israelites born. See *Levit. 23. 42.* when yet of the Passover strangers were bound to eat. The Jews themselves think it was not then fulfill'd; for, as *S. Hierom* on the place says, *Hæc Judæi cassâ spe in mille annorum Regno futura promittunt.* That it's only an *Israelism*, I am not yet persuaded to think; Whereto give me leave to add, that the Sacrifices of that Feast had according to the Jews a peculiar respect to the Gentiles. For whereas on the first day they Offer'd thirteen Bulls, on the second twelve, and so abated every day one, in somuch that on the seventh day there were but seven Offer'd, but in the whole Seventy, according to the number of the Nations; This (say they) signifies the gradual diminution of the Nations, until they should all submit to the Kingdom of the Messiah, whq was to be the desire of all Nations. See *Menass. Ben Israel Vindic. Jud. p. 22. Hospin. de Orig. Fest. Jud. p. 41.*

How the day of Atonement did Typify that of our Lords Passion, though at a different time of the year, I will not now undertake to shew, because it is not a Festival day, and falls not so properly under our consideration; we will therefore pass on.

Thirdly, And now after these, why may not the Memories of the Apostles be preserv'd on certain days, whereon.



whereon, without doing any Worship to them, we bless God for the excellent Graces and Virtues, wherewith he enabled them to be successful Preachers and Champions of the Holy Gospel; so successful that among other Nations, We in this Outskirt of the World, in this remote Isle, heard the joyful Sound, within five years after our Lords Ascension (that is, before *Rome* it self) according to *Gildas*? I say, why on those days, which God hath made so remarkable with the Martyrdoms of the Apostles, should we not glorifie God on that behalf? These were according to *St. Paul* (*Eph. 2. 20.*) the Founders under our Lord, of the Christian Church, and the Representatives of the same according to the Revelation of *St. John*, and the Patriarchs of us Gentiles, by whose Ministry all the Kingdoms of the World have become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. Shall the Founders of small Guilds and Fraternities be honour'd with yearly Celebrities in every City and Country, they that only gave their temporal Goods, which they could not long keep; and shall those great Hero's, the Founders of the Ancientest, Largest and most Noble Society (whereof we all boast to be Members) that resisted unto Blood, and counted not their lives dear, be remembr'd once in the year, to the honor of God, and good Edification of his People, which are the two great ends of all Religion, and the ends of all the Festival Solemnities, which our Church hath thought good to observe; which I will but shortly speak to, because out of place.

First, For the Honor of God. It is requisite, in order to the preserving of a due sense of God upon our minds, that such days as these should often recur. There is a great deal of secret Atheism lurks in mens hearts, and would grow more rampant in their lives, were

were not such days as these stated and fix'd to put some stop to their Mad Career. And doubtless, if they were duly observ'd, and the horrid deaths of those stout Champions often inculcated and well consider'd on; the Religion for which they suffered would appear more true and excellent, and useful, than vain Scepticks now think it, and the neglect thereof more dangerous. It hath been observed by judicious Travellours, that were it not for the keeping of some Holy days, the Christian Religion would be in a manner lost among the poor Greeks and others under the *Turkish* Dominions; and I am afraid, even among us, who should know better, were not times, as well as places, set apart for Divine Worship, the common People would soon Heathenise, and those that seem now of sprucer Wits, herd among the Vulgar. Common experience tells us, what is left to every body is done by no body, and what to be done at any time is done at no time, and what to be done any where is done no where. Wherefore the Honor of God is concern'd in keeping up those days that still remain, and restoring those that are almost lost.

Secondly, It is also for the good of man, not only upon the account of what hath been already said, but this also, that he may have frequent opportunities of retiring out of the hurry and tumult of the World, of bethinking himself, and considering what he is, and ought to be, and hopes to be; of what our Lord hath done for him, and what he expects from him. There is need of such breathing times as these, or else men would be quite overwhelm'd with the cares of this World, or habituated in sin past all hopes of recovery.

Sixthly and Lastly, Upon this Ground of ordain-  
 ing Holy-days, because God hath made them signal  
 by some extraordinary benefit then conferr'd, I think  
 we may soon answer several of those little Objections  
 that us'd to be made against them. As 1. Why no days  
 for *Abraham*, and *David*, and *Samuel*, or any of the  
 goodly Fellowship of the Prophets, as well as for the  
 Glorious company of the Apostles, &c. Why? Be-  
 cause, though they were excellent Persons in their  
 times, and are still great examples of Virtue to us,  
 yet they were not, could not be any ways instru-  
 mental to the Publication and Propagation of that  
 Gospel, upon which we ground our Faith and Sal-  
 vation; and from which, as from the beginning of  
 the World, we date all our actions and all our con-  
 cerns. The Prophets Preached for the most part  
 to the Jews, and few of them were Martyrs, and  
 they that were, suffer'd in a less noble cause and of  
 less concern to the World.

2. When they say the *Great Michael* and all the  
 Angels are Crowded into one day, who still continue  
 to be instrumental to our Salvation; and almost every  
 one of the Apostles hath his distinct day of com-  
 memoration, although their Ministry was soon over;  
 which seems to be no fair distribution. It is soon  
 Answer'd, That the Ministration of Angels is  
 invisible, and we can fix no particulars upon them,  
 but such as are rehearsed upon the greater Festivals  
 of our Lords Incarnation, Resurrection, Ascension,  
 &c. That they did not, could not suffer Martyrdom,  
 as all the Saints did, whose days are kept; and  
 'twas their Martyrdom that Crown'd both them  
 and the days that bear their names, whereon our  
 Lord inabled them to meet death in the Face, though  
 arm'd with utmost Rage and Malice; and verifed  
 and

and magnified the Christian Cause thereby. This was the Lords doing, and not theirs; He made the days and not they, and we keep them to his Glory and not theirs. And therefore when they farther object, the *Sunday* collect gives place to that of the Saints, *Philip* and *James* are feign to share one day between them, as also *Simon* and *Jude*, and the like; they run upon a fond mistake, as if we did Worship to any of them upon those days, which they could not surely have done, had they read the Collects proper for those days.

It is high time I should now say something to the second part of my Text, how a Holy-day is to be kept; *We will rejoyce and be glad therein.* This is that which distinguishes a Fast from a Feast, and makes the latter more Holy than the former, according to that in *Nehem. 8. 9.* *This day is Holy unto the Lord your God, mourn not, nor weep, and v. 10. Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions for them for whom nothing is prepar'd, for this day is Holy unto the Lord; neither be ye sorry, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.* God makes days of joy, and they are Holy to Him; we cannot so truly say of a day of mourning, of a Fast-day. This is the day which the Lord hath made; for indeed, Man made it by his sin, and on it therefore it is his business to bewail his sins, and deprecate the Judgments felt or fear'd upon their account. But when God hath made a day to our hands, a day signal for some great mercy, let us rejoyce and be glad therein. Rejoyce and be glad therein, but how? Not in Riot and excess, and making provision for the Flesh to fulfill the Lusts thereof. No, but let us first give Publick thanks to God for the Mercy of the day, and then if we have opportunity,

let us partake of that Holy Feast of the Body and Blood, a Feast which he hath not only instituted but wonderfully made of himself, a Feast whose name and end is *ευχαριστια*, Thanksgiving. What should we render to the Lord for all his benefits towards us, but according to our Psalmist, *Pf. 116. 12. Take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.* And then, when we have made a difference between the Holy and the Common day by a more plentiful Table, testifie our farther thankfulness and due resentment of Gods Mercy, by works of Mercy and Charity. Fasting doth stir up Choler, the hungry are soon angry; we find how the Hypocrites in *Esaias 58. 2.* Fasted for strife and debate, and smote with the Fist of wickedness, and exacted all their labours, they brought forth their Bills and Bonds, *συνδουλος ἀδουλος ἐς σεβασταίας βιαίας συναλλαγμάτων ἐς πᾶσαν σουργαλίαν ἀδίκων*, as the Seventy have it, whom the Arabick exactly follows, and the Chaldee, Syriack and other Interpreters agree thereto. Although some of our Festival days are the common days of Payment of Rents and Debts, yet we should not exact all our labours, use our utmost rigor then upon failure: Feasting uses to make Men placid and easie to be intreated, and is then most pleasing to God, as well as Fasting, when Men deal their bread to the hungry, and cover the naked, and lodge the harbourless, when they loose the bands of wickedness, undo the heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke, moreover reconciling our selves to our Enemies, and making up differences between Neighbours, Catechising Children, Visiting the Sick, and all such works of Charity are proper works for a Holy day. I need not tell you how Religious the

first



first Christian Emperors were this way, not only in giving, but forgiving, how at Easter they set all Prisoners at liberty, except Traytors, Murderers, Ravishers of Women and such notorious Malefactors. I could tell you how our *Saxon* Laws provided, that no Man should be put to death upon the Lords day, that the Ordeal Tryal should not be undergone upon any Feast or Fast day, and took care for the relief of Prisoners every Lords day. But these are things, which no Man will gainsay, and therefore I will pass on, and come in the last place to enquire what are the causes of the great and general neglect of these days, which the Lord hath made so signal and worthy to be observed. I shall touch on three, Superstition, Profaneness and Covetousness.

First, Superstition, even the Superstition of those men that are most afraid of, or most declaim against Superstition, their conceit is no less Superstitious, than their Notation is fond, in making it to be, *Quicquid super statutum*, I would ask them in this case, what Statute have they that forbids the keeping of any other day, besides the Lords day? If they say, God is the Lord of time, and he hath said, Six days shalt thou labor—I reply, Those words are no part of the fourth Commandment, I mean, not of it as commanding; but a permission encouraging the Observance of the thing commanded, as if it were said, the Lord allows you six days for your own business, and may therefore more strictly require the seventh of you for his own service; they are no more a Command, than that in *Gen. 3. 19* *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread*. But the practice of the Objectors who have indicted Fasts and Thanksgivings on working days, when and as often as they pleas'd, is Constatution enough.

enough to the Objection. But 2. They urge that to the *Galat.* 4. 10. *Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years;* I reply again; If the Context, and Scope of the whole Epistle did not shew it plainly to be written to Judaizing People; those four words in the Text alledged, would tell us the Apostle means the Jewish Festivals, whereof they had four sorts. But what is that to us, that keep days in testimony of our being Christians, and disclaiming all Judaism; and keep them not in imitation of the Jews no more than we do the Sabbath, but rather in order to their invitation and bringing them over to the Christian Faith, and to shew that Christ is greater than *Moses*.

But the great thing they insist on is, 'Tis against Gospel purity, to have mixtures of Human Inventions with Divine Injunctions, and this superstitious conceit is the great cause not only of this neglect, but of Schism or unlawful Separation.

Ans. I have already said, To be thankful for Benefits is a Law of Nature, and no Human Invention; and to give thanks yearly on those days whereon those Benefits were bestow'd, rather than any other is so Natural, hath so great a congruity in it, that the Objectors themselves choose to do so. But let them tell me, is there any more of man in keeping an *Easter*-day than a Fifth of *November*, in praising of God for the first planting of the Christian Religion, than a late preservation of it. But what? Did they never hear of the Feast of *Purim*, and that Feast of the Dedication, whereat our Lord was present; of the Seven days which King *Salomon* kept at the first Dedication of the Altar, and the Seven days that King *Hezekiah* kept at the Feast of Unleavened bread over and above what the Law Commanded, 2

*Chron.*

*Chron. 23. 23. Of the four Fasts in Zeck. 8. 19.*  
 whereof but one was imjoin'd.

But, because they call us so often to the Pattern in the Mount, we will take a View of that, and shew you that the Israelites did not only Act *super*, but *contra statum* in several things; yet no separation was made from Publick Communion with that Church, and therefore every Imperfection can be no just cause of Separation, nor every Supererogation. I will give three notorious Instances, whereof two concern Festivals.

The First shall be touching the Feast of Tabernacles, whereof we read, *Nehem. 8. 17. All the Congregation of them that were come again out of the Captivity made Booths, and sat under the Booths; for since the days of Joshua the Son of Nun unto that day had not the Children of Israel done so; that is, they had not kept the Feast of Tabernacles; at least in that main circumstance of dwelling in Tents and Booths for a Thousand years together; and that throughout the most flourishing time of that Church, although it was expressly Commanded no less than four times in Moses. It is a wonder how it came to pass that neither David, nor Hezekiah, nor Samuel, nor Jehoiadab, nor any other reforming King, zealous Priest, or inspired Prophet, no answer by Urim and Thummin corrected this neglect in so many Ages, in all which time we find no secession made from the Church that then was.*

My Second Instance shall be in a Holy year, the Observation whereof is Commanded, *Levit. 25. 2. &c. When ye come into the Land which I give you, then shall the Land keep a Sabbath unto the Lord, thou shalt neither sow thy Seed, nor prune thy Vineyard, &c.* And now see the Omission in the Punishment (threatned

(threatned *Levit. 26. 34. &c.*) inflicted, 2 *Ezra. 36. 20.*  
 —untill the Land had enjoy'd her Sabbath; for as  
 long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath to fulfill  
 threescore and ten Years. So long the Babylonian  
 Captivity lasted, that the Land might rest and lie  
 untill'd so many years as the Seventh or Sabbatick  
 year had been unobserv'd. Reckon and ye will find  
 just Seventy sevens in four hundred ninety years; so  
 that for 490 years together they had broken the  
 aforesaid Law, to wit, from the days of *Samuel* to  
 the Captivity; and yet no Separation all that while.

My Third Instance (tho not so near a kin, yet  
 not altogether foreign to our business) shall be of  
 a sin of Commission against a most plain and po-  
 sitive Command, in *Levit. 17. 3.* where 'tis said,  
*What man soever there be of the House of Israel,*  
*that kills an Ox, or Lamb, or Goat in the Camp, or*  
*that killeth it out of the Camp and bringeth it not to*  
*the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, to*  
*Offer an Offering to the Lord before the Tabernacle of*  
*the Lord, Blood shall be imputed to that man, he hath*  
*shed Blood, and that man shall be cut off from among*  
*his People.* The same denunciation recurs in the  
 8 and 9 ver. taking in also the Sojourner and Stranger.  
 Ye see the heinousness of the Offence; It was as bad  
 as Bloodshed or Murder to offer else where. And  
 yet, according to some the High Places were fre-  
 quented soon after the days of *Joshua*, and continued  
 till the most thorough reformation of *Hezekiah*; and  
 that space makes near upon Seven hundred years:  
 But, it is infallibly certain, that for Three hundred  
 years, to wit, from *Solomon* to *Hezekiah*, they did  
 Sacrifice in High Places. It is said of *Solomon* him-  
 self, 1 *Kings 3. 3.* *Solomon loved the Lord, walking*  
*in the ways of David his Father, only he Sacrificed*  
 and

and burnt Incense in high places; and the King went to Gibeon and Sacrificed there; for that was a great High Place; a Thousand Burnt-Offerings did Solomon offer upon that Altar, that is, a Thousand Murders did he Commit there according to the forecited Law; unless ye will say it was enough to free him from such an imputation that the Tabernacle was there, although the Ark, the Symbol of God's presence, was at Jerusalem. So indeed it is in 2 Chron. c. 1. v. 3, 4. I will not dispute the thing so far; it is enough that he sinned in burning Incense either there or in other High Places; of that there need be no doubt. Nor was it his sin alone, the People did so too, 1 Kings 3. 2. Ye cannot think Rehoboam and Abija discontinued those High Places, when ye find it an abatement in the Characters of those two good Kings, Asa and Jehosaphat, 1 Kings 15. 14. 2 Chron. 15. 17. and 20. 33. that they were not taken away. Jehoram was so far from removing the old that he made new ones, c. 21. 11. The same exception is made in the Character of Amaziah, 2 Kings 14. 4. and his Son Azariah c. 15. 4. and his Son Jotham, v. 35. But the High Places were not removed, &c. Ahab exceeded Jehoram in multiplying those forbidden Places, 2 Chron. 28. 4, 25. at last came resolute Hezekiah and he swept them all away. Examine the particular Texts, and ye will find, that to Sacrifice and burn Incense in High Places was grown a National Custom; insomuch that though totally removed by Hezekiah they were so restored by his Son Manasseh, that, notwithstanding his deep Repentance and earnest Reformation of all other things, these stood still, 2 Chron. 33. 17. Nevertheless the People did Sacrifice still in the High Places, yet unto the Lord their God only; that is, they were great Transgressors, but not real Idolaters.



These are three great Instances of the deviation of that only then true Church from the Pattern in the Mount, and yet how many Thousands of good and holy Men liv'd and died in the Communion thereof notwithstanding. I say three great Instances, and I may dare to challenge any Man living to give any one Instance of so gross corruption and declension from the Commands of our Lord in this our Church of *England*. Surely none will alledge the Omission of the Womens Veil, and the holy Kils, the Non-abstinence from Blood and the like, which yet were Apostolical Institutions; for by such Allegations they will accuse themselves, and afford more matter of Argument against their own Superstition and Separation. But I hasten, and say

Secondly, Profaneness is another cause of the neglect of the Holy Festivals. Too many there are that have a secret quarrel against all serious Religion; howsoever they pretend highly for the present establishment; this they do not because it is the best, but because it is the present, they have not that value, for what is Relatively Holy, as its Relation to God requires; neither for Person, nor Thing, nor Place, nor Time. 1. As for Persons, they make nothing to miscall and deride, misreport and belibel them unseen and unheard. Private Persons usurp Episcopal Authority, and others do *amore communari*, superciliously mark and fault them that belong not to their Inspection, and gladly receive an accusation against an Elder without any witnesses. 2. And for Things Sacred, they are ready upon all occasions to question, dispute, defalcate and intervert the dues of the Church, as if there were no such sin as Sacrilege, and they never heard of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*. 3. The little esteem they have for Places is soon found,

found, when you come to crave their Benevolence for the building or repairing of them; they are as ready as Judas to say, *Quorsum perditio hec?* Ah, and Lastly, For Times, all days are alike to them, as appears by their neglect of the Prayers of the Church and other duties proper to them. They are for the Festival, but not for the Holy day; for the Mirth, but not for Religion of the time, any farther than to keep their Credit, and save their Purfes; and this brings to the

Third cause of the neglect we complain of, Covetousness; under which we desire not to bring in the Day-labourer that hath as many Mouths to feed, as there are days in the Week to work in, nor the sweating Husbandman, who must attend the seasons of Plowing and Sowing: But those whose Trades and Employments do allow them fair Intervals and Opportunities of attending Divine Worship. These care not, though the Church be shut, if their Shops may stand open; let others serve God, they must serve their Customers, and mind their Trade; they spare not to say so. There are (it is well known) few Holy-days in the Year, whereon there are not held some Marts and Fairs up and down the Country; That of the Ascension of our Lord not excepted. And there needs no bidding of these on the *Sunday* before, nor Bells to toll the People to them; thither they will flock and hasten without taking the Church in their way, tho never so near it; there they Buy and Sell, and get gain, it may be only go to see and be seen; but must think of no other God to serve, but the great Mammon.

Whether this Custom was begun by the Pardon-mongers that chose *Sundays* and other Holy-days to vend their Bulls and their Relicks on; and so occasioning

caſioning great Confluences of People, in proceſs of time Grants were obtain'd to Authoriſe and Perpetuate thoſe Meetings, which turn'd of themſelves from the ſale of ſeemingly holy to that of really uſeful things: Or whatever were the cauſe, it is certain, if Fairs did not borrow their name from *Ferie*, they have robb'd them in moſt places of the Religion that belongs to them. Thoſe that uſed to be held on the Lords-day have been all ſuppreſs'd or adjourn'd to ſome other day. Which ſhows it poſſible that ſome proviſion may be made for the regulating of the other. But whether Authority will firſt think of a way to reſtore the Revenues alienated from the Church-men, or the Honor, whereof theſe Secular diverſions, have robb'd the Church-days I am not able to Divine.

In the mean time let us all do what we can in our own ſpheres and capacities to preſerve that value and veneration, which is due to all that is call'd Holy. And firſt of all for that Holineſs, which is real and intrinſec.

Let us hallow the name of God, and entertain thoughts worthy of ſo Excellent a Majeſty; becoming Him whoſe Nature is the very comprehension of all Adorable Perfection; ſpeak reverently and conſiderately of Him, and to Him. And in all our actions endeavour to be holy as He is Holy. Honor all thoſe that bear upon them any Image of his Holineſs, in whatever unhappy circumſtances they may be.

And then, whatever is therefore Holy, becauſe it hath a proper Relation to God, and is there

fore

fore, as it were appropriated to him, let us use and behave our selves towards the same as such. Let us of the holy Function consider we are taken from among Men, and set apart for Divine things; and therefore ought not to make our selves Common and Cheap, and sell to all Corners and Companies, and Customes and Fashions of the World; ought not to be so Complaisant, as to comply with the sinful humours, discourses, and excesses of those that hate Holiness in their hearts, and shew no more in their lives than needs must, or for fashion sake. And yet, let it not be thought but that there is an Honor due to the Function it self, where the Person is not altogether so deserving; because of the Relation which he stands in to God, and the usefulness which he may be of to Man. And for Places, let us Honor them, not by keeping a distance from them, but by frequenting them reverently and using them to those Holy ends, for which they were at first design'd. Lastly, For Times, let us sanctifie them in like manner, and, while we join with the Church in her Prayers, possess our selves with a deep sense of the Blessing, which we then commemorate, and the weightiness of that Religion, which consists of so many Mysteries, and hath been Confirm'd and Convey'd to us by so many Miracles and Martyrdoms. Let us consider there is a Sacrilege belongs to Time as well as Thing; and the Robbery of the former is the more heinous, because it is not so easie to make Restitution; and the more to be avoided because more easily committed.

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All this let us practise, that we may, and till we do arrive thither, where there will be no Sun  
nor

nor Temple (Rev. 21. 3. 22. 13.) distinction of Time nor Place, nor Persons neither; but all shall be Kings and Priests unto God; and keep an Eternal Sabbath, or day of Holy rest, World without End. For which Happy and Glorious State God of his Infinite Goodness fit us, and then bring us to it, for the sake of our Blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.



# FINIS.

we do strive further, where there will be no sun  
All this let us practice, that we may, and till



*Sermons Printed for Walter Ket-  
tilby at the Bishops Head in St  
Paul's Church-Yard.*

- A** Sermon Preached by a Country Parson Sep-  
tember the 9th. 4to. 1683.  
*Abitophells Policy Defeated; a Sermon Preached  
September the 9th. 4to. 1683.*  
*Dr. Calamy's Sermon, September 9th. 4to.*  
*Mr. Milbournes Sermon, September 9th. 4to.*  
*Mr. Powell's Religious Rebel; a Sermon Preached  
September the 9th.*  
*Mr. Pains 2 Sermons, September 9th. and Jan. 30th.  
4to.*  
*Dr. Smith's Sermon at Norwich, September the 9th. 4to.*  
*Mr. Wagstaffs Sermon, September the 9th. 4to.*  
*Dr. Bishops Sermon, Prosecution no Persecution, Preach-  
ed at St. Edmunds Bury in Suffolk. 4to.*  
*— Modern Pharisees. 4to.*  
*— 2 Sermons 4to.*  
*Dr. Butlers Sermon before the King at Windsor. 4to.*  
*Mr. Battells Sermon at the Assizes at Hartford. 4to.*  
*Mr. Borastons Sermon of Justice and Charity. 4to.*  
*Mr. Browns Visitation Sermon. 4to.*  
*Dr. Calamy's Sermon before the Lord Mayor, May  
29th. 1682.*

- , Sermon before the Lord Mayor, Sept. 1683.  
the 30th. 4to.  
Mr. Cutler's 2. Alices Sermons. 4to.  
Mr. Evans Sermon before the Lord Mayor about  
Moderation. 4to.  
Dr. Fowlers Sermon at Gloucester. 4to.  
Mr. Fox's Sermon at the Herefordshire Feast. 4to.  
Mr. Fyfe's Sermon at the Alices at Rochester. 4to.  
Mr. Gipp's 3 Sermons. 4to.  
— Gaskarth's Sermon at the Funeral of the Duke  
of Lauderdale. 4to.  
Dr. Hick's Sermon of Temptation. 4to.  
— Sermon at the Act at Oxford. 4to.  
—s Sermon before the Lord Mayor, Pecunium  
Dei. 4to.  
—s Sermon of Persecution. 4to.  
—s Sermon at the Yorkshire Feast. 4to.  
—s Sermon before the Lord Mayor. 4to.  
— Sermon at the Spittle. 4to.  
—s Sermon Preached at Worcester. 4to.  
1684.  
Mr. Hopkins Sermon before the Lord Mayor. 4to.  
Mr. Innes Alices Sermon at Warwick. 4to.  
Mr. Kidders Sermon before the Lord Mayor. 4to.  
Mr. Lamb's Sermon before the King at Windsor. 4to.  
—s Sermon before the Lord Mayor. 4to.  
Mr. Lewds Visitation Sermon. 4to.  
Mr. Lynfords Sermon before the Lord Mayor. 4to.  
Dr. Moyses Sermon before the Lord Mayor, 1682. 4to.  
—s Sermon before the Lord Mayor. 1684. 4to.  
Mr. Milbournes Sermon the Originals of Rebellion. 4to.  
Dr. Meggotts Sermon before the King. 4to.  
Mr. Paines Sermon at the Brethwood School Feast.  
4to.  
Mr. Richardsons Sermon before the Lord Mayor. 4to.

AS ✓  
SERMON

PREACHED

ON

Saint MARK's Day  
MDCLXXXVI

IN THE  
PARISH CHURCH  
of S. Paul's Covent Garden.

BY

SYMON PATRICK Rector there.

LONDON. Ⓞ

Printed by J. M. for R. Royston Bookseller  
to His most Sacred Majesty. 1686.